

**STATE OF ALASKA**  
**DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES**  
**DIVISION OF FORESTRY**  
**NORTHERN SOUTHEAST AREA**  
**HAINES OFFICE**  
**COASTAL REGION**

**FOREST LAND USE PLAN / FINAL DECISION &**  
**ACMP CONSISTENCY DETERMINATION**

for the

**GLACIER SIDE 2 TIMBER SALE**

SE 717 H

ADL 106439

**March 2006**

## I. INTRODUCTION

- A. Purpose: The purpose of this Forest Land Use Plan (FLUP) is to provide sufficient information to reviewers to ensure that the best interest of the state will be served by the Department of Natural Resources (DNR), Division of Forestry, Northern Southeast Area, offering for sale an estimated 4,486 thousand board feet (MBF) of timber by sealed competitive bid. The estimated volume consists of 568 MBF of spruce sawlog and utility log volume. The sale also contains an estimated 3,918 MBF of hemlock sawlog and utility log volume.

This timber will be harvested using a clear-cut silvicultural system. Harvest unit area is approximately 150 acres in two units. The contract will run for three years.

Alaska Coastal Management Program (ACMP) Consistency: The Preliminary Decision/Forest Land Use Plan was distributed to state agencies, local organizations and the public library in Haines notifying them of this proposed action on February 24, 2005. Notice appeared in the Chilkat Valley Newspaper on February 24, 2005. No comments were received that specifically contested the State's consistency statement. Therefore this proposed action was found consistent with the Alaska Coastal Management Program on March 25, 2005.

- C. Five Year Plan: The units in this sale have been listed in every Five Year Schedule of Timber Sales (FYSTS) since the first schedule for years 1979 to 1984 was written. The original Glacier Side sale was split into two sales in the FYSTS for 1996 through 2000 called Glacier Side 1 and Glacier Side 2. The current FYSTS for calendar years 2004 through 2008 schedules this sale for harvest in calendar year 2005.
- D. Location: This timber sale is located adjacent to the Glacier Creek drainage approximately 32 miles west northwest of Haines, Alaska (see attached map). The legal description of this proposed action is as follows: Within portions of Sections 25 and 26, T28S, R53E, and Section 30, T28S, R54E, Copper River Meridian. The action is within the boundaries of the Haines State Forest Resource Management Area. This sale is located within the Haines Borough and is outside the boundaries of the Borough of Haines Coastal Management Program. The nearest regional native corporation is the Sealaska Native Corporation. Klukwan is the nearest community, and is located about 14 miles east of the sale. The sale area can be found on the United States Geological Service 1:63,360 Quadrangle map titled Skagway B-4.
- E. Title, Classification and Other Active or Pending Interests:  
The sale area is located on general grant lands within the Haines State Forest. These lands at one time were part of the Original Mental Health Land Trust. A court settlement approved on December 6, 1994 removed these lands from the

Mental Health Trust and reclassified them as general grant lands. This land is subject to the Haines State Forest Management Plan (HSFMP). This sale lies within subunit 3e of Management Unit number 3, Klehini River, of the HSFMP. This subunit has a primary land use designation of forestry and minerals and a secondary land use designation of recreation. This action is consistent with the guidelines established in the HSFMP.

F. Objectives:

1. The primary objectives of this timber sale are to accelerate reforestation and provide jobs from logging and wood processing and to salvage spruce trees killed by spruce bark beetles. This sale will improve forest growth and vigor by replacing over mature defective hemlock trees and insect infected dying stands of spruce timber with new healthy stands while protecting and maintaining other resource values. The actions authorized under this action will follow the constitutional mandate of sustained yield and shall adhere to multiple use management.

2. To follow DNR's constitutional mandate to encourage the development of the state's renewable resources, making them available for maximum use consistent with the public interest. Sustain and promote a healthy timber industry in the state, through providing a secure source of timber for harvest, and by providing a source of raw material (logs) for local manufacturing plants (e.g., mills) while protecting other resources such as fish and wildlife.

3. To enhance the state's economy. This sale will provide an estimated \$50,000.00 in royalties to the state in the form of stumpage receipts; an infusion of approximately \$ 500,000.00 to the state's economy through wages and purchases; and jobs and business, not only for Alaskan residents and companies directly involved in the timber industry, but also for those who provide supplies, equipment and sundries.

## II. **LEGAL AUTHORITY**

The department is taking this action under the authority of AS 38.05.035(e) (Best Interest Finding); AS 38.05.110-120; 11 AAC 71 (Timber Sale Regulations); AS 41.17.010-.950 and 11 AAC 95 (Forest Resources and Practices Statutes and Regulations; AS 46.40; 6 AAC 80 (Alaska Coastal Management statutes and regulations).

## III. **ADMINISTRATIVE RECORD**

Case File ADL 106439 and the Haines State Forest Management Plan constitute the administrative record for this finding.

## IV. **DISCUSSION OF ISSUES**



## A. BACKGROUND

Topography: The sale is situated on flat to uniform sloped ground. General slopes average 40% and range from 0 to 60%. This area generally faces southwest. The elevation of the sale area is from 800 to 1400 feet above sea level.

Soils: Soils in the sale area are classified as a Klukwan-Foad Complex. These soil types are characterized by a shallow organic layer of approximately 2 inches. Soil depth is moderately deep (20-40") to deep (over 60") and well drained. The mineral surface is a silt loam with the subsoil a sandy loam. The substratum is a very cobbly sandy loam to a depth of 60" or more and in some places schist bedrock at 20" to 30".

No caves or cave features were found during the timber cruise of the sale.

Water bodies: There are no lakes in this proposed sale area. Glacier Creek flows adjacent to the south boundary at a distance of 100 feet or more from the harvest units. Glacier Creek is listed in the Anadromous Stream Catalog as containing coho salmon. The small creek that flows through the center of unit five contains cutthroat trout. This stream will be provided with 100 foot buffers on both sides of the creek. There are several other small, intermittent, streams that will be protected by standard best management practices. There are no other wetlands or riparian vegetation that influences the design and/or layout of this proposed sale.

Stand Conditions: There are two distinct stands in this sale. Both stands are predominantly hemlock with a small component of Sitka spruce. One of the stands contains significant heart rot in the hemlock as evidenced by numerous conks on the trees. This stand is a multi-aged stand ranging from 110 years old to 350 years old. There are approximately 78 hemlock trees and 190 square feet of basal area per acre in this stand. Average hemlock size is 26 inches DBH (diameter breast high). There are approximately 17 spruce trees and 44 square feet of basal area per acre in this stand. Average spruce size is 24 inches DBH. The other stand is a single aged stand which averages 160 years old and contains approximately 133 hemlock trees and 263 square feet of basal area per acre and 6 Sitka spruce trees and 11 square feet of basal area per acre. Average spruce size in this stand is 21 inches DBH and average hemlock size is 22 inches DBH. The spruce in both stands has been attacked by spruce bark beetles. The net yield of merchantable wood fiber has declined and will continue to decline over the next few years as decay continues in the hemlock and the beetle killed spruce. The lower net yield and market value will result in higher development costs in the future.

Wildlife: Some moose & bear sign was noted during the timber cruise of the area. In addition to moose and bear, the area may support the following species of wildlife; marten, lynx, wolverine, wolf, porcupine, squirrel, various birds and other small woods mammals. There is no evidence of high-density bear use within this proposed area. There are no known raptor nests within the proposed sale area and the area has not been identified as important winter range for moose or goats. The HSFMP in a strategy to minimize the impacts of harvest on wildlife prohibits timber harvest on about 17,728



acres of commercial old growth timber. It further spreads the harvest of the remaining 41,557 acres of commercial timber over a relatively long period of time. In addition, 12,197 acres of inoperable or inaccessible timber and the 49,000-acre Chilkat Bald Eagle Preserve will not be harvested.

Recreation: There are no known recreational trails within the general vicinity of this proposed sale. There are no airplane access points within the proposed sale area. This area is not known to have unique tourism values. At this time, there are no known commercial recreation operations that use this area. All terrain vehicle (ATV) use of this area is not known. The area may receive use for hunting, berry picking, hiking, snowmobiling, skiing, wildlife viewing and sight seeing.

Cultural: Glacier Creek itself was mined at the turn of the century with a large flume constructed down the riverbed to divert the water. There is some evidence of this downstream from the bridge crossing. There are two large tailing (rock) piles on each side of Glacier Creek below unit 6. Harvesting will not occur within 200 feet of these piles. There was some drill pipe located near the lower boundary of unit 5. This pipe appeared to be within the last 20 years and is contained within the riparian buffer of the fish stream that goes through the unit. The harvest areas and logging activity will not impact any known historic or cultural sites. If cultural or historic sites are discovered, those resources will be protected and the Office of History and Archaeology will be notified.

Scenic: Visual impact from the sale will be moderate. The harvest area will not be readily visible from any of the existing forest roads. The harvest units may be visible from the Haines Highway although the nearest unit is approximately two miles distance away from the Highway at the closest point. The distance should mitigate this impact somewhat, especially after the unit greens up in a couple years.

Land Use: There are presently no other permitted land uses in the proposed area. No agricultural use or grazing is known to occur. Traditional use areas may exist but the sale will not adversely impact these uses. The affected watersheds will continue to be managed according to the land use designation found in the HSFMP.

Current Land Use: Currently, the public lands adjacent to this proposed sale area are being managed for timber, mining activities, and recreation.

Transportation: Main access to this area is by the Little Salmon Logging Road to the Sunshine Mountain Road to the Porcupine Road. These roads are on general grant lands and University of Alaska lands and are public use access roads.

## B. EFFECTS ON WILDLIFE

The effects of the proposed timber sale on wildlife will vary depending on species. Species that prefer early successional vegetation will likely benefit for a period of time. Non-winter browse production may be increased for a period of years after harvest from

the increased heat and sunlight that the openings will provide. Early successional vegetation is valuable for moose browse in summer and low-snow winters. The retention of adjacent unharvested areas will provide cover, winter forage, protection from deep snow, travel corridors and escape cover. The HSFMP intends to create a mosaic of stands in different age classes to provide benefits to many different species of wildlife. Logging is expected to have few direct impacts on the population. Harvesting activities may displace animals temporarily.

Impacts on the bear population are anticipated to be low. Bears may benefit from the increase in early successional vegetation following timber harvest as well. Wintertime forage and shelter is not a major concern for bears due to hibernation. Their welfare is traditionally most threatened by habitat conversion and improved hunter access. There is anticipated to be some impact to the population through habitat conversion. Harvesting activities may displace animals temporarily. Hunter access will be improved somewhat with this sale. The Division of Forestry can work with the Department of Fish & Game (DF&G) to control hunter access if necessary.

C. EFFECTS ON FISHERIES

The proposed harvest is anticipated to have minimal impacts on fisheries. Glacier Creek lies adjacent to the south side of the cutting units. No tree harvest or equipment use will be allowed within 100 feet of Glacier Creek. The stream that flows through the center of unit 5 contains fish and will be protected by 100 foot buffers.

D. EFFECTS ON SUBSISTENCE

The subject area has not been designated as a subsistence zone. This action is anticipated to have no deleterious effects on subsistence activities.

E. EFFECTS ON RECREATION

DNR expects the following recreation uses in the sale area: hunting, gathering activities, hiking, snowmobiling and skiing. This timber sale will provide for continued recreational access into this area as the Glacier Creek Bridge will be put back in, roads will be maintained and approximately 10,238 feet of new road will be constructed.

F. SUSTAINED YIELD/ALLOWABLE CUT

The Forest Resources and Practices Act (AS 41.17.060 (c)) and Article VII Section 4 of the State Constitution require that State Forest land be managed on a sustained yield basis. Sustained yield has been defined in the Forest Resources and Practices Act AS 41.17.950(15):

"Sustained Yield" means the achievement and maintenance in perpetuity of a high level of annual or regular periodic output of the various renewable resources of forestland and water without significant impairment of the productivity of the



land and water, but does not require that timber be harvested in a non-declining yield basis over a rotation period.

The allowable cut harvest for the Haines State Forest has been determined to be 58.8 million board feet (MMBF) per decade. Over the past decade, from January 1, 1995 through December 31, 2004, 14.7 MMBF of timber have been harvested from the Haines State Forest or about 25% of the allowable harvest. This sale will contribute to the allowable harvest volume.

G. REGENERATION

The two units will be harvested using a clear-cut silvicultural system. Due to the availability of seed trees after harvesting, there should be sufficient seed to establish a new crop naturally. To ensure adequate regeneration, replanting of Sitka spruce may be required as part of the timber sale contract. It is expected that the species composition of the future stand will be a Sitka spruce-hemlock mix higher in spruce than the existing stand.

H. HARVEST METHODS

The silvicultural prescription is clear-cutting. Harvesting will be a combination of cable and track vehicle equipment. There should be sufficient soil disturbance to make a good seed bed for natural regeneration.

I. EROSION

There are two soil erosion concerns - surface erosion and mass wasting of soil and debris. Surface erosion is primarily caused by road construction. Surface erosion will be minimized by strict adherence to the contract guidelines and Forest Resources and Practices Act standards.

With regard to mass wasting and debris avalanches, such events normally occur on slopes over 62 percent (62%). Most of the slopes in the harvest area are less than this steepness. The use of a cable system should minimize this risk on the short pitches that exceed this slope. Harvesting may be suspended during periods of saturated soil conditions to assure there is minimal soil disturbance.

J. EFFECTS ON MINING

There has been mining activity on Glacier Creek itself but no known active mining activity in the vicinity of the harvest units. There is little known current mining activity in the area.

K. MATERIAL SOURCES

Approximately 10,238 feet of new road construction are necessary to access the sale area. Material sources have not yet been identified and are typically identified during road construction along the road course. DNR will consider other land uses when approving material sources.

#### L. ECONOMIC IMPACTS

Besides generating an estimated \$50,000 in royalties to the state, the proposed sales will create economic benefits in Haines and possibly other parts of Alaska. The total economic impact of this sale to the statewide economy is estimated to be \$500,000. The Haines business community will receive direct economic benefits from providing support services for the operators such as fuel, food, housing, medical and miscellaneous supplies. The residents of Haines will receive an indirect benefit through taxes paid to the borough by the operator, the employees, and their families during the course of the timber harvest operation.

The timber sale will have an effect on local employment by generating an estimated 10 jobs directly associated with the harvest. The sale is expected to benefit the local economy by providing much-needed jobs and possibly forest products for the local forest products industry. The sale of these logs adds potential employment opportunities and economic contributions to the community. The total sale value of the products produced from the logs in this action is estimated to be \$1,500,000.

#### V. MARKET CONDITIONS

At present there is a moderate demand for local forest products. The local market includes domestic sawlogs, houselogs, and firewood. Domestic sawlogs may be sold to local sawmills as has occurred in the recent past. The export market is moderate as well. The pulp or chip market is depressed and demand is low at this time.

The economic conditions in the general vicinity of this proposed sale are fair to poor. The current local economy is based on logging, fishing, and tourism. The local sawmill, historically the largest employer in the community, has been closed since April of 1991. The tourism economy peaked several years ago and experienced a downturn due to the withdrawal of several of the larger cruise ships. This sector of the economy is slowly rebuilding. Several small mobile dimension sawmills exist in the valley and have purchased most of the smaller sales over the past year.

#### VI. OPTIONS

After a review of the material and information discussed above, the following alternatives should be considered:

1. To continue the sale as proposed.



2. To modify the sale by making it larger or smaller.
3. Offer the sale at another time.
4. Not offer the sale.

A discussion of the four alternatives follows:

Alternative 1. We believe that Alternative 1 is the best alternative to harvest this timber at this time. This will accelerate regeneration, develop a source of logs for the timber industry, and improve forest vigor. It also meets DNR's constitutional mandate encouraging the development of the state's renewable resources. The proposed action may also make use of the beetle-killed spruce prior to further loss of market value.

Alternative 2. The sale size originally included the two units in this sale and additional units on the southeast side of Glacier Creek. Unit 6 was also reduced in size from an original 147 acres to 112 acres. This sale size was selected to harvest as much as possible without removing all of the trees from the area. Increasing the size of the sale would be possible by increasing the size of the units or by including the two units on the other side of Glacier Creek or by extending the salvage to other road systems and additional drainages. Decreasing the size of the sale would likely result in an uneconomical timber sale. A smaller sale would not offer enough volume to amortize the cost of the necessary road construction.

Alternative 3. This would fail to meet many of the objectives of the sale. This sale area has been in the Five Year Timber Harvest Schedule for logging since the first schedule was produced in 1979. Timber harvest could be deferred at this time; however, the postponement of the sale would not likely alter the design for a future offering.

Alternative 4. This would result in not meeting any of the objectives outlined for this management action. Utilization of the forest resource would not be achieved, there would be no contribution to the state and local economy, and there would be no restoration of forest health. Regeneration in the proposed sale area would be significantly delayed.

## VII. **ACMP CONSISTENCY ANALYSIS**

This area is not within a district coastal program, and is therefore subject to statewide standards (6 AAC 80). There are no known geophysical hazards or areas of historic or archaeological importance within the proposed sale area. Recreational and subsistence use of the area is low; no seafood processing is designated to occur in this area; there is no grazing or agriculture use of the area. Therefore, the sale does not conflict with the standards on geophysical hazards; historic, prehistoric, and archaeological resources; fish and seafood processing; subsistence and recreation; agricultural use.

This offering is consistent with the habitat standard because the Forest Practices Regulations preempt the habitat standards enacted under AS 46.40

In addition, the sale does not cause an impediment to existing or future transportation or utility corridors, and is therefore consistent with that standard.

Laws and regulations regarding timber harvesting, and the quality of air, land and water will apply, ensuring consistency.

## VIII. OBJECTIONS, COMMENTS, AND ALTERNATIVES RECEIVED

Comments received on the sale are summarized below:

Comment: *Scenic viewsheds have long term economic values and shouldn't be sacrificed for short term, one time timber sales. Please conduct a viewshed analysis for this and other sales pending along the Haines Highway corridor before offering this sale. The Haines Highway was designated a state scenic byway in 1998. Timber sales along this corridor should be reevaluated in light of the state designation and the current work by the Haines Convention and Visitor Bureau for national designation. Further destruction of the scenic values of this corridor should be avoided to encourage National Scenic Byway designation.*

Response: The Haines State Forest Management Plan classified this subunit of the State Forest as Forest Land, which is to be managed primarily for commercial timber harvest. This subunit of the Haines State Forest Management Plan contains 4,400 acres of operable forestland, which is all intended to be harvested over the 120-age rotation period. One of the management guidelines for this subunit is to consider the scenic values of the area as viewed from the Haines Highway in preparing a Forest Land Use Plan. We realize the importance of the scenic view shed as viewed from the Haines Highway and did consider this in the design of the sale. While there is value in hiding units from view in their entirety, at some point in the rotation period, if timber harvest is to be sustainable, those areas that cannot be hidden or screened must be harvested. We would rather show a little of the harvest areas gradually over time rather than showing large areas that cannot be hidden, at some point in the future.

Trees adjacent to the highway screen the units in the Glacier Side 2 sale over much of the length of the highway. The area of Highway where the units will be most visible is along the new section built onto the river flats from 35 mile to 37 mile where there is no vegetation adjacent to the highway. The Glacier Side 2 units lie on a relatively gentle plane low on the hillside across from this section of highway so parts of the units will be shielded from view by the trees in the leave areas immediately in front of the units as viewed from this angle. In doing an analysis of this view from one point in the middle of the 35 to 37 mile section less than half of the units as currently designed in the Glacier Side sales will be visible. The nearest unit in the sale to this section of highway is approximately two miles distant and this distance also helps reduce its impact on the view shed. The units will be most visible immediately following harvest but vegetation quickly regrows into the unit openings causing the units to "green up" making the



contrast between the harvest unit and the adjacent timber less extreme and less of an impact on the view shed.

We realize the value that Scenic byways can bring to a community. National Scenic Byways can be based on archaeological, cultural, historic, natural, recreational as well scenic qualities. The Haines Highway would be eligible in several of these categories. The designation if it happens also must be based on wide community support. The Haines State Forest Management Plan was based on area wide community input and support. The two are certainly compatible and while we work towards protecting the scenic value in designing our timber sales, this does not mean they will be entirely hidden from view but rather will try not to show large harvest blocks at any one time.

Comment: *The sale is too large.*

Response: The changing the size of the sale was discussed under section VI Options, alternative 2, above, by making the sale size larger or smaller. A smaller sale would not provide sufficient volume to offset the cost of the road construction and would likely result in an unsold sale.

Comment: *The office of History and Archaeology concurs with the finding of No Historic Properties Affected as long as the tailing piles (rock piles) adjacent to Glacier Creek are avoided with a buffer of 200 feet.*

Response: The FLUP has been modified to reflect this change.

Comment: *The office of Habitat Management and Permitting requested a site inspection to locate where the end of the catalogued portion of the small tributary ended below unit 5.*

Response: A site inspection was conducted and it was determined that no blockage existed for the stream up to the upper boundary. This FLUP has been modified to reflect this and 100 foot buffers will be left on both sides of this stream.

## **IX. FINAL FINDING, DECISION AND ACMP CONSISTENCY DETERMINATION**

After due consideration of all pertinent information and alternatives, the DNR has reached the following **Final Decision: To offer the sale as proposed in alternative 1.** The DOF finds that this final decision satisfies the objectives as stated in this document and it is in the best interest of the State to proceed with this action under its authority of AS 38.05.035(e) & AS 38.05.120.

This decision also contains the DOF's consistency analysis. The DOF believes this action is consistent with the Alaska Coastal Management Program. The requirements of applicable statutes and regulations have been satisfied. No comments were received that

challenged the proposed consistency of this timber sale. The DOF therefore is issuing an immediate Final Consistency Determination as allowed under 11 AAC 110.255 (j).

A person affected by this decision who provided timely written comment may appeal it in accordance with 11AAC 02. Any appeal must be received by April 3, 2006 and may be mailed or delivered to Mike Menge, Commissioner, Department of Natural Resources, 550 W. 7<sup>th</sup> Avenue, Suite 1400, Anchorage, Alaska 99501; or faxed to 1-907-269-8918, or sent by electronics mail to [dnr\\_appeals@dnr.state.ak.us](mailto:dnr_appeals@dnr.state.ak.us). If no appeal is filed by this date, this decision goes into effect as a final order and decision on April 3, 2006. An eligible person must first appeal this decision in accordance with 11 AAC 02 before appealing this decision to Superior Court. A copy of 11 AAC 02 may be obtained from any regional information office of the Department of Natural Resources.



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Roy M. Josephson  
Northern Southeast Area Forester

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March 13, 2006  
Date